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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 BOGOTA 009276

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [MASS](#) [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [KJUS](#) [CO](#) [FARC](#)

SUBJECT: PLAN COLOMBIA MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - AUGUST

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood

Reasons: 1.4 B & D

1. (U) The following is an update of Plan Colombia activities reported during August 2005.

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE/JUDICIAL SECTOR REFORM PROGRAM  
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2. (U) The Department of Justice Judicial Sector Reform Program (JSRP) provided training to police officers, judges, and prosecutors in the following courses:

--Prosecutor Training for 120 prosecutors in Paipa and Cali. This two-week course is designed to prepare prosecutors for the new criminal procedure code and an accusatory system. In addition, the course focuses on developing the necessary technical skills for making charging decisions, trial preparation, presenting evidence, and trial techniques. U.S. and Colombian prosecutors served as instructors.

--Police Instructor course for 30 National Police in Tunja and Yopal. The two-week course is designed to prepare the participants as instructors, and they will then train other patrol officers on the accusatory system and the new Criminal Procedure Code. They were instructed in how to handle crime scenes and deliver testimony in court.

--Police Officer course for 60 additional police officers in Bogota and Yopal. The two-week course is designed to prepare patrol officers for their role in supporting the new accusatory system.

--"Investigator As a Witness" training for over 800 police officers in eight cities: Bogota, Villavicencio, Bucaramanga, Medellin, Ibague, Cali, Tunja, and Yopal. This intensive two-week course provides training in handling crime scenes, writing police reports, and testimony in court. Classroom training is combined with practical exercises, including mock courtroom proceedings. Colombian prosecutors participate in the mock court proceedings as both defense attorneys and prosecutors.

--The one-week "Judge Training" course on the new Criminal Procedure Code and the accusatory system for 50 judges from Cali, Buga, Valle de Cauca, and Medellin. The course is designed to prepare judges for the new criminal procedure code and an accusatory system. The training was based on a series of practical exercises, including mock courtroom proceedings. U.S. and Colombian judges served as instructors.

3. (U) The Anti-Corruption seminar was provided to 60 directors and assistant directors from National Police (CNP), Department of Administrative Security (DAS) and the Prosecutor General's Office Technical Investigative Corps (in Spanish, "Cuerpo Tecnico de Investigaciones" or CTI) in Barranquilla and Medellin.

4. (U) "Intellectual Property" training was provided to 30 police investigators and forensic examiners in Barranquilla. The course offered instruction in the forensic methodology used to investigate cases involving piracy and intellectual property violations.

5. (U) The one-week course on "Expert Witness Testimony" was offered to 25 forensic laboratory experts from the CNP, DAS, CTI, and Legal Medicine. Participants were trained on how to testify and present complex forensic data in criminal trials. U.S. and Colombian forensic experts served as instructors.

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MILITARY GROUP  
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6. (C) Military Group (MilGroup) Commander visited Apiay Forward Operating Site (FOS) on August 10. The visit coincided with the initial deployment of the first U.S. Army/Southern Command (USARSO) FOS Commander, who is completing a site survey. The deployment is intended to initiate a more integrated approach to coordinating garrison issues by joint users stationed at the FOS, as well as establishing a more organized and deliberate coordination effort with the Colombian Air Force. The approach has become increasingly important as Apiay is the hub of the U.S. Intelligence, Search, and Rescue (ISR) effort. As the number

of platforms increases, so have associated support and force protection concerns. The FOS Commander will play an important role in providing MilGroup and U.S. South Southern Command (SouthCom) components a central point of contact (POC) for managing garrison issues at the FOS.

17. (C) MilGroup met with the Colombian Military (ColMil) Joint Command for an initial planning meeting. Future meetings in this series will more closely examine and define what phase Two C or "IIC" of Plan Patriota will look like, since such definition is critical to U.S. planning and out-year budgetary efforts.

18. (S) In a meeting with Joint Command Chief, MilGroup discussed efforts to do training on site exploration following destruction of a FARC camp and verify tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). ColMil officials and the MilGroup Commander agreed verbally to request official orders to be sent to Joint Task Force (JTF) Omega. The JTF Omega Commander continues to cause problems. There is considerable concern that the Commander, General Fracica, is not willing to work with US trainers.

#### SECURITY ASSISTANCE DIFFICULTIES

19. (U) The ColMil expressed concern over the delay in processing Security Assistance (SA) Letters of Request (LOA), Amendments, and Price and Availability (P&A) Requests. Slow processing is causing the ColMil significant frustration. The period of time officially allowed for processing these documents is 120 days for LOAs, 90 days for Amendments, and 45 days for P&A requests. U.S. Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC) is currently not processing within the official time allowed for 38 percent of LOAs and 50 percent of P&A requests. Air Force Security Assistance and Training (AFSAT) is currently not processing within the official time allowed for 66 percent of LOAs and 100 percent of P&A requests. Navy International Program Office (NAVYIPO) is currently not processing within the official time allowed for 87 percent of LOAs. Southern Command J5 continues to work on this issue.

110. (S) The ColMil Commander reportedly convened a two-day conference for flag-officer joint staff and the service commander. The conference sought to chart the way ahead for Plan Patriota phase IIC, specifically the identification of general operational parameters. MilGroup is engaging the ColMil to determine requirements to Plan Patriota. The Minister of Defense (MOD), in a meeting with the MilGroup Commander on August 25, emphasized that the next six to nine months will be critical to the ColMil effort. He has asked for a meeting with the SouthCom Commander during his next scheduled trip to Colombia to discuss future plans.

111. (S) In a meeting on August 24, the ColMil Chief of Staff requested that SouthCom assist in the campaign planning effort required to support implementation of the phase IIC effort. There seems to be widespread agreement within the ColMil that the next phase of the plan will be more difficult than the previous phase. The FARC will likely assume a much more defensive posture to gain breathing space, while engaging in terrorist activities designed to create instability for the government while their guerrilla organization recovers. The MilGroup will generate recommendations for such a planning effort under separate cover.

112. (U) The Universidad Militar Nueva Granada (New Granada Military University) and the Center of Strategic Studies, Development and Defense (a Colombian defense think-tank), with the support of the U.S. Embassy, are sponsoring the first Civil-Military Relations Democracy Seminar scheduled for October 26. President Uribe will present the opening remarks. The purpose of this seminar is to analyze Civil-Military relations in Colombia, and participants will discuss how this relationship is critical in defending democracy and fighting terrorist threats. The sponsors are requesting that a general officer from SouthCom represent the U.S. Military and serve as the guest speaker. Participants from the embassies of Spain, Great Britain, and Israel will also address the group. MilGroup agreed to make the request to SouthCom, and will coordinate that speaker's visit, if approved.

113. (U) The 30th Counter-Guerrilla Brigade completed training. The unit was trained in critical air assault training tasks. The unit also received marksmanship training on the newly arrived M16 rifles and optic sights.

114. (U) Robert Nassif, Senior Examiner of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), visited Colombia from August 30 until September 2. Nassif was accompanied by Bob Knotts, David Viens, and Maj. Jack Sparks. Nassif, who manages the world-wide counter-narcotics portfolio for OMB, came to obtain a better understanding of DOD's Colombia Counter-Narcotics program as part of USG support to Plan Colombia and Plan Patriota. The MilGroup visit focused on effective use of DOD resources in building ColMil

capabilities, which have contributed significantly to Colombia's enhanced security and stability. The delegation received a MilGroup briefing and visited the Embassy Intelligence Fusion Center. They also received program reviews at several Colombian military installations, including the Combined Operations and Intelligence Center and Combined Counter-Drug Communication Center in Bogota. Outside of Bogota, the delegation visited the MilGroup representatives and Colombian officers supervising the Rotary Wing Training program in Tolemeida. He also visited the Chief of Joint Staff, JTF Omega for an operations briefing, and attended a cocaine production and brigade capabilities demonstration with the Counter-Drug Brigade in Larandia. MilGroup considers the visit to have been a success.

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Narcotic Affairs Section  
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15. (U) August 31 year-to-date aerial eradication for coca reached 111,496 hectares and 1,557 hectares for opium poppy.

16. (U) The Plan Colombia Helicopter Program (PCHP) has a total of 126 certified helicopter mechanics. In addition, there are 87 Colombian Army Pilots who have completed training in the PCHP.

17. (SBU) Three new Carabinero squadrons started training in August, and with the completion of these trainees, there will be a total of 47 Carabinero squadrons trained. The Carabinero Units have been devoting significant time to providing security for the GOC manual eradication efforts. 26 Colombian Narcotics Police (DIRAN in Spanish) went to the U.S. for specialized training in August.

18. (SBU) The GOC passed a resolution authorizing spraying in Colombia's National Parks under certain conditions. The Embassy has asked Washington agencies to permit us to assist with spraying glyphosate against coca in national parks.

19. (SBU) The Deserter Program received 240 deserters in August. These individuals or small groups are not considered to be demobilized. They are FARC, AUC, and ELN members who decide individually to desert and turn themselves in to the MOD. Since the Uribe Administration began, through August 2005, there have been 7,976 deserters. The breakdown is as follows: FARC 3,978; AUC 2,694; ELN 1,082, and other organizations 222. The radio is the primary way in which potential deserters learn about the program.

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Regional Security Office  
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20. (U) The Regional Security Office (RSO) has conducted a host of activities in support of the Anti-Terrorism Assistance and Anti-Kidnapping Initiative (ATA/AKI). During the month of August, the ATA/AKI Program finalized its Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 training schedule and made all FY06 equipment orders for the Crisis Response Training Courses (CRTs) to be presented during FY-06.

21. (U) The CRT began training for the first Naval Marine Infantry Group (GAULA Sucre) at the Sibate Police training Academy.

22. (SBU) With the September 30 deadline for the initial turnover of the Anti-Terrorism Assistance/Sistema Integrado de Informacion Extorsion y Secuestro (SIIES) Network to the GOC fast approaching, the issue of connectivity for 20 GAULAS and the completion of the LAN/WAN contracts with the internet service provider IMPSTAT were the main issues discussed at meetings with the Foundation for Liberty (FONDELIBERTAD). In addition, RSO has pressed the GOC to begin to hire the Colombian SIIES Transition Team. At a final meeting with the Director of the FONDELIBERTAD and the Vice Minister of Defense on August 31, these issues were finally resolved, and FONDELIBERTAD agreed to proceed with the signing of the outstanding contracts and the hiring of a transition team.

23. (U) During this period, the equipment to be donated to the GOC during FY06 for the next series of CRTs was ordered. This equipment donation totals approximately USD 1.3 million. Also during this period, an American instructor was lightly injured when a dud training device exploded while being rendered safe. As a result of this incident, the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) governing the handling of unexploded training devices was revised.

24. (U) Though not directly a part of the regular ATA/AKI curriculum, Diplomatic Security and ATA offered the GOC a Hostage Negotiation Course for 24 participants to be held at Baton Rouge, LA from October 31 ) November 11. RSO sent the GOC an official letter of invitation on August 30.

25. (SBU) The Presidential Security Program (PSP) currently

has three Plan Colombia personnel in country. One recent hire will serve as the lead advisor and is filling the positions left vacant when two former contractors decided not to renew their contracts in May. This is part of a projected downsizing of the program's personnel. PSP recently completed two refresher courses for advanced personal protective security agents. One course consisted of 20 participants, and the other consisted of 18 participants, representing the Vice President's security detail.

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USAID  
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126. (U) On August 17, Ambassador Wood and Foreign Minister Barco formalized the FY05 obligation of USD 126.8 million in U.S. socio-economic and humanitarian assistance. To date, the USG has allocated a total of \$603.4 million, including \$145.1 million to support a more responsive and accountable democracy, \$291.2 million to promote economic and social alternatives to illicit crop production, and \$167.1 million to provide economic and social opportunities for displaced persons and other vulnerable groups.

127. (U) The Embassy, through an implementing partner, contributed USD 40,000 to support the third Afro-Colombian Institutional Strengthening Conference held in Cali from August 4 to 5, 2005. Colombian Vice-President Francisco Santos, U.S. Congressman Gregory Meeks, Mr. George Grace, and Ms. Vanessa Williams (president and executive director of the U.S. National Conference of Black Mayors) all attended the event. The Conference was organized by the National Association of Afro-Colombian Mayors (in Spanish, Asociacion Nacional de Alcaldes de Municipios con Poblacion Afrodescendiente or AMUNAFRO). The conference identified strategies for the social, economic, and political advancement of Afro-Colombian communities.

128. (U) Embassy assistance in supporting the design of new regulations in public accounting and internal control, as well as capacity building, was reflected in the Comptroller General's 2005 report to the Congress and the President. The report summarizes the results of audits performed in 2004 of over 372 national GOC entities. It noted that 64 percent of the entities obtained a score of GOOD in the areas of financial and performance evaluations. This represents an improvement from the 2002 report and over 10 percent improvement from 2004 results. According to the Comptroller, these results were due in part to improved financial accounts, strengthened implementation of improvement plans, and adherence to results-based principles in the executive branch.

WOOD